

Moorestown Sun - October 15, 2009

By Congressman John Adler

I am writing in response to a letter from Moorestown resident Stanley Ralph who asked me to elaborate on my position regarding health-care reform and government spending.

First, I would like to invite you to attend one of my next town halls or community meetings. Since January, I have hosted more than 50 meetings and events, including many public discussions on health care.

I firmly believe that we need health-care reform in this country. We cannot simply protect the status quo. But just as important reforming the system, is making sure Congress does it right. The current bill under consideration by the House of Representatives is not the right bill for America.

Congress should not pass a reform plan that will increase our deficit, place an unfair financial burden on taxpayers and businesses, or leave our families and businesses to face continued escalating health-care costs. HR 3200 fails to do enough to curb costs and keep health care affordable in the long term.

With the summer behind us, Congress needs to get back to work and pursue many of the ideas I discussed with Burlington County residents during the last few months. We need to put other reforms on the table that will improve the quality of care while also lowering costs:

- We must squeeze the waste and fraud out of our health-care system in order to preserve Medicare and keep our promise to all seniors.
- We can change the philosophy around delivery of care by awarding quality and not quantity. We should talk about reform that stops the practice of defensive medicine, or the use of too many unnecessary and cost prohibitive tests to avoid costly litigation.
- Congress should explore the idea of establishing a "medical home" model to ensure that a network of doctors have the capability to coordinate care.
- Finally, taxpayer dollars should not reimburse hospitals for patient readmissions and

should penalize hospitals where patients acquire dangerous infections.

Congress should find permanent solutions to our health-care crisis, but we need to consider all these areas of reform and produce a sustainable long-term plan.

And it is not just health-care spending that we need to curb. That's why I recently voted for pay-as-you-go legislation that requires Congress to balance any additional spending with a commensurate cut elsewhere in the budget.

I also voted 15 times to cut a total of \$51 billion from the federal budget. On Jan. 22, I voted against releasing the second payment of the \$700 billion TARP program for large banks.

And now I am working hard to get that money paid back to taxpayers. I thank you for engaging in this debate, and assure you that I will continue my efforts to work with republicans and Democrats to find reforms that will benefit hard-working American families, seniors, taxpayers and small businesses.